One of the Americus Four Tells His Story, Pps. 3 & 6

President Johnson: Lower Level Than JFK But The Country Could Have Done Worse, See Page 2

I. F. Stone's Bi-Weekly

VOL. XI, NO. 24 DECEMBER 9, 1963 WASHINGTON, D. C. 20 CENTS

We All Had A Finger on That Trigger

There was a fairy tale quality about the inaugural and there was a fairy tale quality about the funeral rites. One half expected that when the lovely princess knelt to kiss the casket for the last time, some winged godmother would wave her wand and restore the hero whole again in a final triumph over the dark forces which had slain him. There never was such a shining pageant of a Presidency before. We watched it as children do, raptly determined to believe but knowing all the time that it wasn't really true.

Of all the Presidents, this was the first to be a Prince Charming. To watch the President at press conference or at a private press briefing was to be delighted by his wit, his intelligence, his capacity and his youth. These made the terrible flash from Dallas incredible and painful. But perhaps the truth is that in some ways John Fitzgerald Kennedy died just in time. He died in time to be remembered as he would like to be remembered, as ever young, still victorious, struck down undefeated, with almost all the potentates and rulers of mankind, friend and foe, come to mourn at his bier.

Impasse at Home and Abroad

For somehow one has the feeling that in the tangled dramaturgy of events, this sudden assassination was for the author the only satisfactory way out. The Kennedy Administration was approaching an impasse, certainly at home, quite possibly abroad, from which there seemed no escape. In Congress the President was faced with something worse than a filibuster. He was confronted with a shrewdly conceived and quietly staged sitdown strike by Southern committee chairmen determined to block civil rights even if it meant stopping the wheels of government altogether. The measure of their success is that we entered this final month of 1963 with nine of the 13 basic appropriation bills as yet unpassed, though the fiscal year for which they were written began last July 1 and most of the government has been forced to live hand-to-mouth since. Never before in our history has the Senate so dragged its heels as this year; never before has the Southern oligarchy dared go so far in demonstrating its power in Washington. The President was caught between these old men, their faces set stubbornly toward their white supremacist past, and the advancing Negro masses, explosively demanding "freedom now." Mr. Kennedy's death, like those of the Birmingham children and of Medgar Evers, may some day seem the first drops portending a new storm which it was beyond his power to stay.

In foreign policy, the outlook was as unpromising. It was proving difficult to move toward co-existence a country so long conditioned to cold war. Even when Moscow offered gold for surplus wheat, it was hard to make a deal. The revolt in Congress against foreign aid illustrated how hard it was to carry on policy once tense fears of Communism slackened even slightly. The President recognized the dangers of an unlimited arms race and the need for a modus vivendi if humanity was to survive but was afraid, even when the Sino-Soviet break offered the opportunity, to move at more than snail's pace toward agreement with Moscow. The word was that there could be no follow up to the nuclear test ban pact at least until after the next election; even so minor a step as a commercial airline agreement with the Soviets was in abeyance. The quarrel with Argentina over oil concessions lit up the dilemma of the Alliance for Progress; however much the President might speak of encouraging diversity, when it came to a showdown, Congress and the moneyed powers of our society insisted on "free enterprise." The anti-Castro movement our CIA covertly supports was still a spluttering fuse, and in Vietnam the stepping up of the war by the rebels was deflating all the romantic Kennedy notions about counter guerrillas, while in Europe the Germans still blocked every constructive move toward a settlement in Berlin.

The Real Test of Our Morality

One way to demonstrate to the world in the wake of the President's assassination that we are a civilized people would be to pass a law forbidding the CIA ever, directly or indirectly, to finance or plan the killing of a foreign leader we dislike.

Essentially Conservative

Abroad, as at home, the problems were becoming too great for conventional leadership, and Kennedy, when the tinsel was stripped away, was a conventional leader, no more than an enlightened conservative, cautious as an old man for all his youth, with a basic distrust of the people and an astringent view of the evangelical as a tool of leadership. It is as well not to lose sight of these realities in the excitement of the funeral; funerals are always occasions for pious lying. A deep vein of superstition and a sudden touch of kindness always lead people to give the departed credit for more virtues than he possessed. This is particularly true when the dead man was the head of the richest and most powerful country in the world, its friendship courted, its enmity feared. Everybody is anxious to celebrate the dead leader and to court his successor. In the clouds of incense thus generated, it is easy to lose one's way, just when it becomes more important than ever to see where we really are.

The first problem that has to be faced is the murder itself: Whether it was done by a crackport Leftist on his own, or as the tool of some rightist plot, Van Der Lubbe style, the fact

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Any Honeymoon With Congress Is Likely To Be Short; Bobby Baker LBJ's "Heel"

Johnson Far Below JFK in Sophistication, Breadth and Taste

The scramble for positions of influence with the new Johnson administration makes it almost impossible to get an objective view of the man; everybody from the politicians to the Washington correspondents are, with few exceptions,* outdoing themselves in flattery of the new monarch. His vanity, his thin skin and his vindictiveness make even the mildest criticism, or approach to objectivity, dangerous.

The Perfect Extrovert

The negative aspects of Johnson are these. In sophistication, education and taste, he is a sharp drop from Kennedy. He has hardly read a book in years; never reads when he can help it; prefers to get information by ear, but rarely listens. He is one of the most long-winded men in Washington; a Babbit, with a remarkably small stock of basic ideas; these consist of a few clichés about freedom, which he translates largely into the freedom of the entrepeneur to make a buck. Money and power have been the motivating passions of his life. He was a New Dealer when that was the road to power, he became a conservative when that was the way to stay in. He is the perfect extrovert, with no convictions and a passion for "getting things done," anything. He rose as rapidly as he did in the House and later the Senate by endless sitting-at-the feet, after hours, of Sam Rayburn and later Senator Russell. *Then* he listened, the respectful and flattering young man; he had a genius for ingratiating himself with the old men of the Southern oligarchy. But he kept his lines open to the liberals, in order to deal with them, too, and he likes to picture himself as a Westerner rather than a Southerner.

Johnson's skill as a legislative manipulator may be overestimated. In the Eisenhower period, he was an effective middle man between the Republican and Democratic conservatives. In the special session of 1960, after the election, however, he and Kennedy together found it impossible to put through a moderately liberal program. Johnson is not a racist or a reactionary; he once told a visiting civil rights group that he had learned all he knew on the subject from Aubrey Williams (of the Southern Conference Educational Fund, once Johnson's boss in the New Deal's National Youth Administration) and Mary McLeod Bethune. As a shrewd politician, he knows he must move slightly leftward and make civil rights his No. 1 issue if he is to change the view of him as a Southern politician, with a basically standpat philosophy. In Texas the liberals distrust him deeply for running out on them and his New Deal past; the conservatives hate him for having been a more than loyal Kennedy lieutenant on civil rights.

The Southern Oligarchs Unsoftened

The Republicans suddenly feel a chance to win the next election and he will have a very short honeymoon. The Kennedy assassination has not softened the hearts of the Southern oligarchs and their coalition with the Republicans may easily and quickly be resumed. The vulnerable point of the new President is his old protege, Bobby Baker, a mercenary corkscrew of a character whose extraordinary influence in the Senate throws a horrifying light on the decayed underside of that august institution, and on Johnson's own aesthetic standards. The Republicans may have trouble in exploiting the Baker case, however, because it probably links up with as many ugly deals on their side of the aisle as on the Democratic side. It will take all Johnson's skill and energy to hush up this scandal and get action out of Congress. Men like Fulbright and Benjamin V. Cohen will be good influences in this administration, but on the whole Johnson like Truman will bring a lot of rather unseemly cronies to town and its level of literacy and civilization will fall again, as it did after FDR.

The hope is that men change and grow. A man's past is not necessarily a guide to his future, especially when he reaches the highest posts of a society. The sense of role, the maturing effect of responsibility, the consciousness of duty and love of country, the sense of humanity and history, all have their effect. Tom Clark, a one-time Texas lobbyist, not much of a lawyer, but a decent human being and never a racist, has made an honorable record and grown in stature on the U.S. Supreme Court. There may be surprises in Johnson, and we wish the new President luck. The manner and energy of his debut stir hope.

*** The only exception we have noted is James Reston who dared write in his column (New York Times, Nov. 27) that Johnson was "tyrannical with his personal staff, disorderly about administration and apoplectic about characters who write sentences like this . . . more thin-skinned about press criticism than anybody . . . since the last President Johnson . . . he has tended to regard dissent as perversity . . . as if criticism were not a duty in a free society but a crime" For a bureau chief, for whom access to the White House is a necessity, this took courage.**

Oswald's Mexican Trip May Prove The Key To The Assassination

The Left would like to find a way to blame it on the Right; the Right would like to blame it on the Left; the Arabs, in the ever irresponsible Egyptian press, are trying (because of Rubi) to blame it on the Jews. We have had phone calls from readers around the country, offering jigsaw puzzle theories of how the Kennedy assassination happened. We think it dangerous to spin theories from so few facts.

The press learned something from the McCarthy years, and handled the fact that Oswald seems to have been some kind of a leftist with great restraint. Not so many years ago there would have been screamer headlines, in some sectors, at least, "President Killed By Red." For this we can all be grateful and for the new Administration's wise move in heading off Eastland and the House Un-Americans by appointing a top level Commission under the Chief Justice to examine and report on the facts.

The killings may be just what they appear to be, or they may be part of a plot. If they are, it will take considerable time and hard digging to find out. What this requires is much more police work by police more trustworthy than those of Dallas and less sympathetic to the right than the FBI. It is always dangerous to draw rational inferences from the behavior of a psychopath like Oswald. But it would be important to know who financed his trip to Mexico, and why he took steps which at once, in a more panicky atmosphere, might have linked the Russians and the Cubans with the slaying.

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Difficult to Organize the Poorest and the Wealthiest Among Negroes . . .

By John Perdew

In case you should wish to introduce this article you should know that I am 21, a student on leave from Harvard College, a field worker with SNCC. I've spent five months in southwest Georgia, partly in Albany and partly in Americus. I spent 20 days (June 19-July 9) in jail in Albany on charges of disorderly conduct, defacing public property, resisting arrest, and assault with intent to murder. I was released on $1900 bond (cash). I spent 85 days (August 8-Nov. 1) in Sumter County jail on charges of inciting to insurrection, interfering with a lawful arrest, rioting, unlawful assembly, and assault with intent to murder (state charges) and resisting arrest and disorderly conduct (city charges). I was released by order of a three-judge panel of federal judges on $2100 bond, which declared the insurrection and unlawful assembly statutes unconstitutional and all eight peace warrants lodged against me invalid. The court is in recess and will convene again after Dec. 1 to decide whether to issue an injunction restraining local officials from depriving people of their civil rights under color of law.

We asked one of the Americus Four to write his story for us and we are proud to present in his own words the reactions of John Perdew of Denver to the situation in the South. It breathes an objectivity, a humanity and a selflessness characteristic of SNCC. This article is given new meaning by the news that a grand jury in Americus has reindicted Perdew along with the other three (Ralph W. Allen of Melrose, Mass.; Donald Harris of New York City and Thomas McDaniel of Americus) for assault with intent to murder and rioting. The widest possible public support must be mobilized for these heroic young men if the vindictive authorities of Americus are not to succeed in finding some way to keep them in prison for many years.—IFS

Participants in the civil rights movement today are not given to utopianism, but a theme which lies behind picket lines, mass demonstrations, and arrests is the attempt of American blacks to feel the pain of oppression which they have so long suppressed and find the strength to overcome it.

This became painfully apparent to me during my three month stay in the Sumter County Jail in Americus, Georgia, on charges of inciting to insurrection. One of the black prisoners there, a man in his forties, could not stop calling me "sir", even after I tried for several weeks to break his habit. For him the pain of communicating with me, a white, was so great that he avoided me as much as possible even though he knew I was in jail because of civil rights work. The way to relationships of mutual respect between white and black is blocked by deep counter currents in the personalities of, I would say, the majority of Southern blacks.

Still Jim Crow Despite ICC

Surface events in the racial struggle mean little until one can understand why, in Albany, Georgia, in spite of an ICC ruling which ended segregation in the bus terminal there, few blacks use the formerly "white" waiting rooms. After two years of mass demonstrations, boycotts, and voter registration, Albany blacks have little to show for their suffering in official desegregation, and the balance weighs heavily against even casual integration. The scale of success, however, is the people's state of mind, and there are at least several hundred blacks in the city who can now face a white man without the need to feel servile. These are the ones who have faced beatings, jail and the wrath of the white man with aggressive non-violence and have experienced at least temporary unity in the long-divided Negro community.

There is at least one basic institution through which Southern blacks (I use "black" rather than "colored", which is the euphemistic word attached to segregated facilities) attempt to release and rectify the frustrations which result from inferior status. Country churches in particular have evolved a "language" of music and preaching and patterns of intense emotional possession which are baffling and embarrassing to whites used to more formal and "rational" means of religious expression. The elaborate, shifting chords and embellishments of a "common meter" hymn; the rising cadence of the black in the pulpit singing the Word; the shouts of the old bent ladies in the Amen Corner; the pleading prayers of the grimacing deacon—all are media through which, I think, the most oppressed blacks may convince themselves that their afflictions represent the road to that "great gettin'-up mornin' ".

The most talented and sensitive SNCC workers enter a country church and speak in the language of black religion but with the message that suffering, while a source of strength, is dehumanizing, that retreat only intensifies it. Black churches, for this reason and for convenience, become the site of mass meetings, the most regular feature of the Movement, and old hymns carry new words, themes such as "We shall not be moved", "We shall overcome", "This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine".

A totally different reaction to segregation consists entirely in an attempt to be "white". Students at Negro colleges in the South, many teachers at all levels, some ministers with relatively wealthy congregations, and aspiring politicians and professionals deny their "roots" in black culture. Straightened hair, a flashy car, esoteric cultural tastes and formal, restrained church services become symbols of the escape. The result, in terms of the Movement, is that many, though certainly not all, of the upper classes in the Negro community will not actively identify themselves with the Movement.

In canvassing for voter registration I have found the most response from people in the middle ranges on the Negro income scale. The very poor are frequently afraid of me as a white (sometimes they will not answer the door, other times they will agree to everything the canvasser says in order to get rid of him). Or they are realistically or irrationally afraid that they will suffer eviction, firing, or even "legal" or physical intimidation. Ignorance and apathy as well obscure the connections in their minds between their personal failure to register and the fact that from top to bottom the "government is a white man". At the upper end of the scale, businessmen are threatened with white boycott, revocation of licenses, litigation, and property damage if they take an uncompromising public stand for black interests. Teachers, ideally a powerful force, usually in my experience succumb to subtle pressures from principals and the school board, much as teachers all over the nation willingly or not steer away from "controversial issues". All of these pressures reinforce the tendency to disavow "black roots" in a drive for respectability.

Only the most confident and aggressive leader can counteract the forces which maintain the status quo, for on the level

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What the Reviewers Are Saying About I. F. Stone's Book

"THE HAUNTED FIFTIES"

Donald Mintz in the Washington Star (Nov. 4):

"Mr. Stone's little journal . . . is one of a favored few small journals whose influence is greater than their subscription lists. . . . Within a few pages of the beginning of the book, all insidious notions of skipping here and skimming there vanish. . . . Mr. Stone's reports and polemics have survived very well indeed. . . . primarily because Mr. Stone is so remarkably clear minded . . . with a power of penetration that must make other commentators despair. . . . Genuine conservatives should enjoy Mr. Stone nearly as much as radicals."

Gerald W. Johnson in The New Republic (Dec. 14):

"His astonishing quality is not that he is independent but that, being independent, he has survived. . . . He is controversial in a day when controversy is equated with sin. He is bold, when courage is next door to treason. He is non-mercenary when indifference to money is close akin to forgetting God. He is extremely diverting when being amusing without being on television is usurpation."

Emile Capouya in The Saturday Review (Nov. 16):

"That one-man journal was founded in the days when Senator Joseph McCarthy was making the rules around here, and I suppose it is one of the reasons that McCarthy's triumph was not more complete in his lifetime, nor his heirs more firmly in power now. . . . Mr. Stone's reportorial prose is beautifully clear . . . clean as good French."

Quincy Howe in Book Week (Nov. 24):

"In this age of Hearst task forces, Time-Life writer-researcher-biographer teams, and Readers Digest condensations, I. F. Stone stands out as the embodiment of do-it-yourself journalism."

Senator Joseph S. Clark (D. Pa.):

"I am glad you have collected your pieces and given them this permanent form. It is our guarantee that there will be an alternative to the pap in tomorrow's history books, just as there is an alternative to the pap in today's newspapers in your splendid newsletters."

Wm. German in San Francisco Chronicle (Nov. 3):

"'The Haunted Fifties' . . . measures up to a remarkable vivisection of a nervous and stange decade. . . . The wonder and excitement of those 10 years comes back strongly as Mr. Stone's scalpel sifts through the weekly bits. . . . More power to this cheerful prophet."

Sam Galabow in the Charlotte (N.C.) Observer:

"This book is written by a man with a great sense of social justice. . . . It is amazing that one man can be so fearless and brave, that one man can refuse to tolerate cruelty and injustice, that one man can persevere in the search for truth, and that this same individual can also feel cheerful about the human race and believe that man ultimately will solve his problems."

Virginia Kirkus' (Book) Service (Oct. 1):

"It has been ten years since I. F. Stone has appeared in hard covers: a long time, indeed, and readers of this book are likely to agree both that it was much too long and well worth the wait. As a collection of contemporary articles on every conceivable political and moral aspect of the troubled times between Eisenhower's and Kennedy's first months in the White House, this volume is nothing short of astounding. What Stone saw so clearly and fought or advocated then, *nearly everybody holds to be self-evident* now . . . *This is contemporary history of the finest, most readable sort."*

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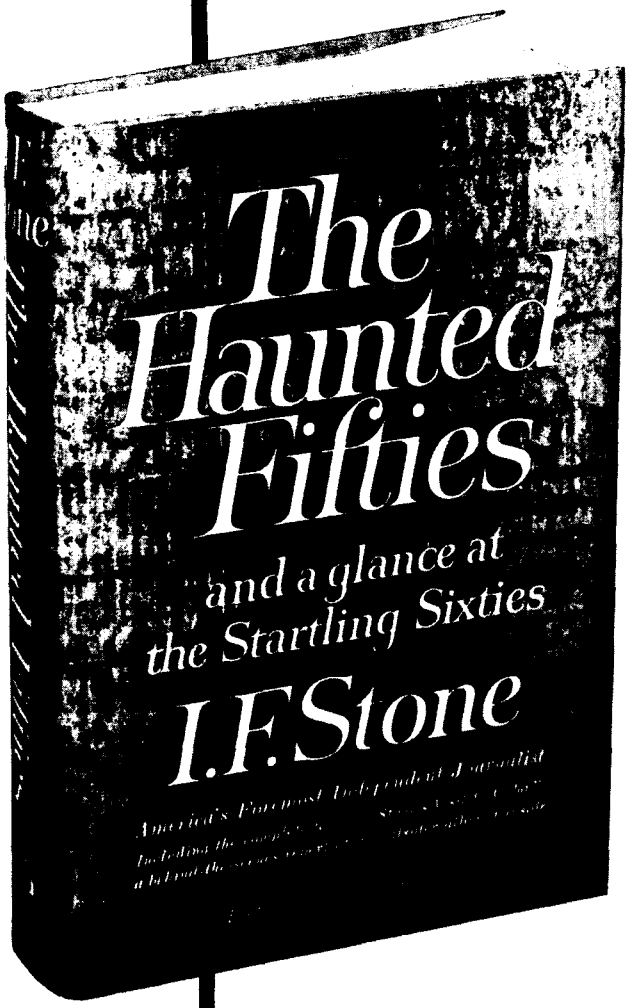

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by I. F. STONE

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—from the Preface by James R. Newman

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. . . Washington Evasive and FBI Often Unsympathetic to Brutality Charges

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of personal contacts all but the most militant need a lot of pushing to rise out of short-term thinking and passivism. It is clear that youth are the most active leaders and followers in this Movement, but the most charismatic leaders are often defeated by their heroic image when, for example, their awed followers ask for autographs and lavish praise rather than risking jail and violence. An everyday principle in SNCC work is: balance between the hardest demands of a militant movement and the compromise necessary to maintain enthusiasm and communication.

Despite endless condemnation of the effects of white domination in propaganda, a basic submission to authority sometimes emerges in the strangest places. A southwest Georgia police chief once entered a mass meeting wearing his gun and was greeted not with a mass exit or cold silence but with uncertain applause. A skillful law officer can blunt the edge of the strongest leadership. Journalists, ministers, parents, and teachers can apply similar pressures in creating an aura of conventionalism — in phrases describing the "well-dressed, middle-class" Movement—which obscure the originality and depth of change. Paternalism as well undermines resentment and determination by a superficially friendly atmosphere.

The Whites, Too, Are Fearful

I think it can be argued that segregation both feeds on and spawns mutual fear between black and white and that this fear interacts with clear economic pressures. If violence may be said to indicate fear in the aggressor, then it becomes clear why it is in the blackest counties and towns of the South that lynchings and beatings are the commonest. One Georgia sheriff revealed his fear of a black SNCC worker when he forgot to lock him up after a conference with lawyers outside the cell block. Another sheriff once caned a SNCC lawyer who came to his jail to see about a white SNCC worker whom the sheriff had ordered beaten by prisoners. The most rabid segregationist propaganda reveals a fear of sexual and cultural pollution.

But the unbelievable intimidation which official and private whites wreak on "uppity niggers" would be impossible to perpetuate without economic support and incentive. The white employers and businessmen rely on the local monopolies which protect them from retaliation. If they antagonize the black population by kicking a customer or firing a black worker, they still in most cases run the area's only grocery or furnish the only source of employment. Only a well-organized and timely boycott can restrain the white who is driven to such behavior. And only massive voter registration and organization can restrain local politicians and law officers from arbitrary intimidation.

Strategy then is complicated when it is unclear whether deep prejudice and fear or expediency are driving a specific aggressor. In any case "justice" in the Black Belt can be accurately symbolized by the token prosecution of the Birmingham bombers and the threat of execution levelled against me and three other civil rights workers in Americus, Georgia.

Will the Movement for racial equality turn to violent tactics, and if it did would this tactic achieve the end of integration? I think the answer to both questions is "no". Organized violence will not come because the individuals capable of violence in the black population are least ready for sustained discipline. Gang leaders frequently work with SNCC but our insistence on non-violence forces them to choose between discipline within the Movement and violence against each other. The end of one such leader's association with SNCC could be placed at the time when he was wounded in a battle with a rival black gang. If violence were adopted as a tactic, I think, the effect of it would be to confirm and strengthen white fears.

Where is the federal government in all of this? My contact with the most active local representatives of the federal government, agents of the FBI, has been less than enchanting. While perhaps one third of the local agents I have met have been fairly impartial Northerners, the others, natives of the South, have taken statements from me with poorly disguised skepticism and sometimes antagonism. I have also talked with sympathetic Justice Department investigators, but their province is generally strictly limited to the evidence related to intimidation of prospective voters.

Official statements from Washington are usually evasive concerning allegations of police brutality: "there is no evidence", "investigations are underway (after three months!)", or "we have no authority to deal with this issue". But SNCC has submitted hundreds of sworn affidavits specifying cases of police brutality, and the FBI is in possession of photographs showing bruises and welts which we suffered as a result of official violence.

A symptom of the attitude of the federal government toward civil rights is Kennedy's appointment of a judge to the southwest Georgia district court who has consistently rendered unfavorable decisions in cases involving racial issues. His views on race relations were well-known before his appointment.

Where, then, does the Movement stand in southwest Georgia, and where is it going? Voter registration is receiving the greatest emphasis in anticipation of the elections next November. Albany, Georgia, saw a Black run for Mayor in October this year. An inevitable problem is low turnout—in this case roughly 60% of the registered Negroes, 10% of whom apparently voted for one of the two white segregationist candidates. White reaction to the candidate was surprisingly favorable, and he received a few votes in all-white wards. Political pressure has a high potential in towns like Americus, where almost 50% of the population is black, yet only 10% of the eligible blacks are registered.

The history of Albany, I think, has shown that momentary crises are not effective in bringing a change unless they are backed by substantial and visible economic and political power. Where once over 700 people went to jail during demonstrations, now potentially active participation is limited to a few tireless workers.

The Movement is reaching far greater economic sophistication in selective patronage, in a producer's co-operative for farm owners and workers (aimed at combatting price discrimination and seasonal unemployment), and possibly combination with white workers in union activity. Meanwhile, the currents of fear and pain and courage continue to clash in the Black Belt.

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SNCC's Devoted Handful, Determined to Change The World, Recalls Earlier Martyrs

Where Caesar's Lions Failed, Can the South's Cattle Prods Win?

There is nothing wrong with our younger generation when it can produce a movement like SNCC. Not since the great pre-revolutionary generation in Russia, its assorted Narodniks, SR's, Marxists and Tolstoyans, has any great power produced as devoted a group of youngsters as the four hundred or so Negro and white young men and women of the Students Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, which held its fourth annual conference here in Washington at Howard University the week-end of Nov. 29.

Non-Violence Their Deepest Faith

I have had the privilege over the past few years of getting to know a few of them. They are an impressive lot. Purity is the only word for their intrinsic quality—the absence of self-seeking or of vanity. They are the stuff of saints. They are determined to change our country, and for them the most fundamental change of all is to win by non-violent means, to answer hate with love. They stand in a line that runs back from Gandhi to Tolstoy to Thoreau to St. Francis to Jesus. I regard them with reverence.

To be with them was a moving experience. They draw sustenance, the whites as well as the blacks, from Negro roots. Most of them are not religious in any conventional sense, but the whole movement is steeped in Negro religiosity at its best. On one side of their nature, they are sophisticated intellectuals; on the other, they feel akin to the Negro racial past. "We have a mandate," said their chairman, John Lewis, "from our forefathers who were slaves." One moment they were talking of the need for a planned economy and the next they were singing, "Like Christ, they died for you and me." They are ragged and ill-fed but their eyes shine. Against just such a consecrated few, powers more formidable than the lily-white South have fallen in the past, Czars and Caesars.

Cattle prods will not help, any more than it once helped to feed them to the lions. The South has a right to be terrified. Robert P. Moses, the director of SNCC's voter registration drive, used an unforgettable metaphor when he spoke of SNCC's work as an "annealing process." This young ex-school teacher from New York, with his round, brown African face, told the conference, "Only when metal has been brought to white heat, can it be shaped and molded; this is the annealing process. This is what we intend to do to the South and the country, bring them to white heat and then remold them."

The vision which provides a pattern for that remolding is beyond race; it seeks the emancipation of Man from his own suicidal divisions. Bob Moses is a sober seer, and does not fool himself. "The problem of the Negro is not the same as that of the European immigrant," he told the conference. "He could be accepted gradually as part of a broader European community. Our country and the world have not yet grappled with the problem of creating a community broad enough to encompass the Negro and the African." When it comes, it will have to be big enough to hold all mankind.

The Mexican, the Puerto Rican, the white unemployed, were not forgotten at this conference. James Baldwin and Bayard Rustin, like Lewis and Moses, saw the Negro's problem in broad human terms; to emancipate himself, he must emancipate the rest of us, from unemployment, from prejudice and from war. Baldwin spoke with the fury of a Hebrew prophet; Rustin with the objectivity of a still youthful Negro elder statesman, who believes as a lifelong pacifist and Socialist that only in a broader movement can the Negro hope to win jobs and freedom, and make a revolution "in a serious sense."

SNCC originated in the Fall of 1960 out of the sit-in student movement which began in Raleigh, N. C., in the spring of that year. Never have so few managed to make a bigger impact in a smaller space of time. They cheered when Lewis in his closing speech said, "We'll march through the heart of the South as Sherman did." Though an unarmed few, they have already set a whole region trembling; the earth shakes again as always under the footsteps of faith.

The Lunacy in the South

Three speakers at the SNCC convention provided vivid glimpses of the lunatic atmosphere in the South. Norman Thomas said, "There was a time when I somewhat romantically thought Eisenhower or Kennedy should have taken children to school personally in the Southern school disputes, but after being in Mississippi I would be afraid to have them do so." Robert Moses said the reaction in Jackson, Miss., to the President's murder was one of "indifference or suppressed joy." Wm. Hansen of Howard University was in jail in Helena, Arkansas, when Kennedy was shot. "A trusty came in with a grin on his face," Hansen related, "and said, 'Hey, boys, the President's been shot.' A few minutes later he came back and shouted, 'Hey, he's dead.' The trusty and the cops were jumping up and down with glee."

Will This Dubious Affair Be Used For More Warlike Action Against Cuba?

We welcome the successful conclusion of Venezuela's election and we can see no sense in its terrorist opposition. But we regard with suspicion the charge by the State Department and the Betancourt regime that an arms cache found on Venezuela's shores was of Cuban origin.

The fullest account we have seen in the U.S. press of this arms cache appeared in the Baltimore Sun Nov. 30. This made clear (1) that the arms were of Belgian manufacture and (2) that they were linked to Cuba by rather obscure means. A State Department spokesman quoted by the Sun said "modern laboratory techniques" now made it "possible to raise serial numbers and seals, even though efforts have been made to erase them." Such evidence should be submitted to an international body more worthy of confidence than the OAS before a verdict is handed down.

Cuba today is a tightly blockaded isle. Our planes and our naval vessels watch all that goes in and comes out. The Castro government, which denies that it sent arms to the Venezuelan terrorists, would be foolish in the extreme to run this blockade with an arms shipment which would give its enemies just the chance they have been looking for. We hope more objective forces at the UN can be mobilized to prevent this charge from being used as an excuse for more warlike action against Cuba.

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The Danger in Canonizing Kennedy As An Apostle of Peace

(Continued from Page One)

is that there are hundreds of thousands in the South who had murder in their hearts for the Kennedys, the President and his brother the Attorney General, because they sought in some degree to help the Negro. This potential for murder, which the Negro community has felt for a long time, has become a national problem. But there are deeper realities to be faced.

Wouldn't We Be Happy to Kill Castro?

Let us ask ourselves honest questions. How many Americans have not assumed—with approval—that the CIA was probably trying to find a way to assassinate Castro? How many would not applaud if the CIA succeeded? How many applauded when Lumumba was killed in the Congo, because they assumed that he was dangerously neutralist or perhaps pro-Communist? Have we not become conditioned to the notion that we should have a secret agency of government—the CIA—with secret funds, to wield the dagger beneath the cloak against leaders we dislike? Even some of our best young liberal intellectuals can see nothing wrong in this picture except that the "operational" functions of CIA should be kept separate from its intelligence evaluations! How many of us—on the Left now—did not welcome the assassination of Diem and his brother Nhu in South Vietnam? We all reach for the dagger, or the gun, in our thinking when it suits our political view to do so. We all believe the end justifies the means. We all favor murder, when it reaches our own hated opponents. In this sense we share the guilt with Oswald and Ruby and the rightist crackpots. Where the right to kill is so universally accepted, we should not be surprised if our young President was slain. It is not just the ease in obtaining guns, it is the ease in obtaining excuses, that fosters assassination. This is more urgently in need of examination than who pulled the trigger. In this sense, as in that multi-lateral nuclear monstrosity we are trying to sell Europe, we all had a finger on the trigger.

Murder In Our Way of Life

But if we are to dig out the evil, we must dig deeper yet, into the way we have grown to accept the idea of murder on the widest scale as the arbiter of controversy between nations. In this connection, it would be wise to take a clear-sighted view of the Kennedy administration because it was the first U.S. government in the nuclear age which acted on the belief that it was possible to use war, or the threat of war, as an instrument of politics despite the possibility of annihilation. It was in some ways a warlike administration. It seems to have been ready, soon after taking office, to send troops into Vietnam to crush the rebellion against Diem; fortunately both Diem and our nearest Asian allies, notably the Filipinos, were against our sending combat troops into the area. The Kennedy administration, in violation of our own laws and international law, permitted that invasion from our shores which ended so ingloriously in the Bay of Pigs. It was the Kennedy Administration which met Khrushchev's demands for negotiations on Berlin by a partial mobilization and an alarming invitation to the country to dig backyard shelters against cataclysm.

We Can Easily Bluff Once Too Often

Finally we come to the October crisis of a year ago. This set a bad precedent for his successors, who may not be as skillful as he was in finding a way out. What if the Russians had refused to back down and remove their missiles from Cuba? What if they had called our bluff and war had begun, and escalated? How would the historians of mankind, if a fragment survived, have regarded the events of October? Would they have thought us justified in blowing most of mankind to smithereens rather than negotiate, or appeal to the UN, or even to leave in Cuba the medium range missiles which were no different after all from those we had long aimed at the Russians from Turkey and England? When a whole people is in a state of mind where it is ready to risk extinction—its own and everybody else's—as a means of having its own way in an international dispute, the readiness for murder has become a way of life and a world menace. Since this is the kind of bluff that can easily be played once too often, and that his successors may feel urged to imitate, it would be well to think it over carefully before canonizing Kennedy as an apostle of peace.

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